

Our alliance of values goes beyond our efforts against threats to peace and security, but it begins there. It also includes a commitment to freedom and democracy, a conviction that open markets are engines for progress, a determination to give all our people a chance to contribute and be rewarded for their efforts in the future we are building, a passionate belief in the potential of every child and the right of all children to a good education, a profound concern for the environment that we hold in trust for future generations.

Near the end of his long life, General San Martin said, "All progress is the child of time." Here at his final resting place, I say to you, I believe he would applaud the progress Argentina and all the Americas have made and the direction we are taking toward a new era of

peace and prosperity. But I also believe he would remind us of the work still undone, the challenges still unmet. He would urge us to press on to make progress the child of this time.

Clearly, we have the chance and the responsibility to redeem the promise of San Martin, beyond even his visionary dreams. And so, Mr. President, with high hopes, strong resolve, and generous spirits, let us take our chance and do our duty together.

Thank you, and God bless the people of Argentina and the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:20 a.m. in the Plaza San Martin. In his remarks, he referred to President Carlos Saul Menem of Argentina and Mayor Fernando de la Rúa of Buenos Aires.

Statement on a Line Item Veto of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1998 *October 16, 1997*

I have used my line item veto authority today to cancel a provision of the 1998 Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act that provides an open season for certain Federal employees to switch retirement systems.

This line item veto will save \$854 million over 5 years by preventing a hastily conceived, undebated provision from becoming law. In addition, my action will keep agencies from having to reallocate another \$1.3 billion in limited discretionary resources to pay higher retirement benefits, rather than spend it on other priorities, such as pay increases, or essential agency needs.

I did not propose this provision in my 1998 budget, it was not the subject of public hearings, and it was not considered by either the House or the Senate. Instead, it was added at the end

of the legislative process, in a House-Senate conference committee. I believe that by canceling this provision, I am using my line item veto authority in an appropriate manner.

I am committed to ensure that the Federal Government can recruit and retain the quality individuals we need to administer Federal programs. I will work with Congress to ensure that our Federal civil servants are compensated fairly for the essential work they do for the American people.

NOTE: The report detailing the cancellation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 17. H.R. 2378, approved October 10, was assigned Public Law No. 105-61.